



SINI 4 Spotlight

Volume 3 Number 1

August 2012

Welcome to the first issue of Volume 3 of SINI 4 Spotlight. This occasional newsletter will provide guidance for members of the 2012 SINI 4 cohort. Your membership in this group may not feel like a positive recognition right now, but I hope your experience with the *Steps to Success* process will convince you that the journey you will be taking this year is a worthy one. You, your team, and your staff are being invited to commit to a process that will be hard but meaningful work that results in a credible, realistic plan for change that will benefit each and every one of your students. Isn't that our primary goal as professional educators?

This issue includes reminders, suggestions, and contact information you may find helpful.

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Calling all Process Managers!

Once you have identified a Process Manager for your team, update the School Information section of your Steps to Success workspace. I hope to convene all Process Managers for a teleconference or web meeting to give them a tour of the workspace and show them how to navigate the tool.

2011 – 2012 SINI Progress Report Reminder

The NH DOE has shifted responsibilities and asked me to review the 2011-2012 SINI Progress Reports and 2012-2013 SINI Action Plan. You can find the instructions and forms on the DOE



website at http://www.education.nh.gov/instruction/integrated/title_i_sini.htm. Note: do *not* follow the instructions for Steps users – you are still using the familiar SINI layout and template. You are not yet able to create a progress report using Steps reports.

Follow the instructions in the document and submit electronically to Kristine Braman (Kristine.braman@doe.nh.gov). Kristine will forward to me and I will review your submission promptly.

Remember to include in your 2012-2013 SINI Action Plan an activity saying something similar to “engage school staff in the Steps to Success process.” With that activity included, you can access funds in the Online Grants System to request use of the \$10,000 grant to support your restructuring planning year work. The funds can be used to reimburse members for committee time outside contractual hours, hire a facilitator to help manage the process, or for other activities needed to develop a plan that has the support of your staff and community.

Call me if you have questions about the SINI Progress Report.

Steps to Success (Indistar) Online Tool Layout Changes

If you’ve logged on to *Steps to Success* since the end of July, you probably noticed dramatic differences in the layout of the screen information than we demonstrated at the May orientation. ADI, the developers of Indistar, decided to revise the arrangement of the materials on the Dashboard and on the Main Menu pages to accommodate the needs of the 25 different states that use the tool.

Click on the text to the right of the megaphone to see a visual crosswalk of the new and old layouts.



New Look for Indistar
Click here to see what's new

I will be working over the coming months to change the guidance documents on the Steps page of the NH DOE website to agree with the new layout. In the meantime, call me if you can’t find your way around the tool.

Tasks and Timeline for the Restructuring Planning Year

At the May orientation meeting in Concord, you submitted your registration form and should have received a password to access your school’s workspace on the *Steps to Success* online tool. If you have not registered yet, please go to the *Steps to Success* page on the NH DOE website and follow the instruction on the [Steps to Success Registration for Schools and](#)



Districts. Submit the completed form to Kristine Braman (Kristine.braman@doe.nh.gov) as soon as possible.

Some of you have already begun planning the year ahead and recruited a representative team to lead the planning work for the coming year. Several of you invited me to meet with your team this summer to orient them to the process and help make some decisions about managing the work. As you move into the school year, here's an abbreviated chart showing Tasks and a general timeline to advise you what to do when:

When	What	How
Fall 2011	Recruit a representative team Schedule Restructuring Team meetings Identify a Process Manager to enter and retrieve information from the online tool	*StS web page – Phases of the Cycle *Making Indistar® work for You documents www.indistar.org
	Review the <i>Steps to Success</i> process with team, staff, and community	*SINI 4 Restructuring Planning ppt (NH DOE website)
	Decide how to manage the work	(see next article)
	Process Manager enter team members in Step 3, enter the URL for the state report card on Step 2 (SKIP other entries on Step 2 unless you need typing practice ;-))	*VIDEO on Steps tool Dashboard
	Complete Step 4 to assess your current practices against the 82 indicators of effective practice.	*VIDEO on Steps Dashboard *SINI 4 Spotlight articles, guidance docs
January 2012	Review the priority rankings, do a 'gut check' to identify the key indicators influencing your school's performance;	!! Face to Face meeting for 2012 Schools -- date and time TBD *Guidance documents on StS web page
	Begin Step 5: Create a Plan for the Priority indicators you've identified as critical to your student's success	*VIDEO on Steps Dashboard *SINI 4 Spotlight articles *Guidance documents on StS web page
March 2012	Complete Step 5; DISTRICT schedules a peer review of the plan	*SINI 4 Spotlight articles *Guidance documents on StS web page
April 2012	Communicate the plan with the staff; complete the accessory forms and documents	*Guidance documents on StS web page SINI 4 Spotlight articles
May 2012	Submit the plan for restructuring to the DOE	*Guidance documents on StS web page

Note that I am tentatively scheduling a face to face meeting in **January** to give you a chance to share and learn from other schools and to offer recommendations for using the tool to create your plan. If other face to face meetings are of interest, let me know and we can try to schedule them.

With the large number of schools this year, I will not be able to meet with each of you in person, but I will continue to share guidance with you via this newsletter and on the *Steps to Success* page on the NH DOE website. I encourage you to call or email with questions as well.

Managing the Work

There are many options for managing the work of assessing your school's current practices against indicators of effective practice in the *Steps to Success* tool. At the orientation meeting in May, we discussed two primary methods: "all for one; one for all" and "divide and conquer." A brief reminder of how each operates:

1. "All for one; one for all" (aka committee of the whole): small schools, those with fewer than a dozen or so classroom teachers, sometimes choose to complete the assessment phase by meeting as a group, sorting into pairs or trios and dividing the set of indicators among themselves. Once each pair, trio or other small group records its judgment about current level of implementation, and assigns priority and opportunity values, they share with the full group and revise as needed with insights from across the full school community
2. "Divide and conquer" (aka delegate or representative assembly): Many schools recruit representatives from existing teams or work groups to serve on the coordinating council/ restructuring team (*My shorthand for restructuring = Rstr). These representatives have an obligation to report back to their constituents and to gather input from those constituents when assessments are completed. Because the greatest benefits of *Steps to Success* come from having as many voices in the discussion as possible, representatives often serve as facilitators when grade level teams or subject area teams complete the assessment of a selected set of indicators. This presents the opportunity for building leadership skills among the school staff, adding to the school's capacity to improve its performance.

In each method – committee of the whole or representative group -- the set of 82 indicators can be sorted and assigned to subgroups for the assessment step. It's important that each subgroup have a facilitator who ensures everyone understands key terms like 'priority' and 'opportunity.' Practice among the members is essential. When subgroups conduct the assessment, they represent only a small portion of the whole school community. It's important to bring their conclusions to the coordinating team with representatives from all areas of the school for review and corroboration. Remember: the conclusions of the assessment of current practice represent the best judgment of the group responsible for overseeing the development of a plan for change.

Sample Assignment Calendar: Let's look at an example for a school using the "divide and conquer" approach. On the tasks and timeline chart, the target for completing the assessment of current practices against all 82 indicators is approximately December to January. Let's assume the school has a 7 member Rstr Management team/ coordinating team/ steering committee including representatives of each grade and specialist group.



Here's a possible schedule showing that each team will be responsible for a modest number of indicators each month. Using existing collaboration time, this schedule has been shown to be manageable in many schools. In a few cases, the Rstr Management Team met for paid time after or before school or substitutes were hired to allow the Rstr Team to do its work.

Who	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
Rstr Team	5	5	X*	X*
Teacher Team A	3	5	5	5
Teacher Team B	3	5	5	5
Teacher Team C	3	5	5	5
Staff Team D	3	5	5	5

Once teachers/ staff members become familiar with the assessment protocol, they can complete an adequate assessment in anywhere from 5 to 20 minutes per indicator. Team leaders may need to reinforce the recommendation that subgroups should spend NO MORE than 20 minutes on a single indicator. If conversation continues past 20 minutes, the discussion has likely gotten off track or another barrier is in the way. The indicator should be returned to the Rstr Team for their consideration.

Many schools have found it best to have the Rstr Management Team meet at least twice per month for at least 90 minutes each meeting. This allows them to carry out their tasks, which include monitoring the process by gathering feedback from the teachers and staff and assessing their own assigned indicators. During November and December, the Rstr Team will be reviewing the submissions from the teacher / staff teams to confirm that the findings are generally accurate across the entire school community.

However you choose to manage the work, remember that the professional learning that emerges from the conversations about your own practice compared to each of the indicators, informed by the Wise Ways, is the critical outcome of this phase of the process.

Responsibilities of Team Members

If you use a delegate team to guide the *Steps to Success* planning year work, each member has responsibility to those s/he represents to communicate team decisions and gather input to bring back to the group from the field. Here's some suggestions on how to carry out that role.

Report to Constituents:

The benefits of the *Steps to Success* process come from the conversations across the school community about good educational practice. The vision of excellence that emerges from these

conversations will guide teachers' and leaders' actions to foster the highest achievement for all students.

Your role as a member of the Restructuring Team includes gathering from your "constituents" -- those whose voice you represent -- their vision of excellence for your school as it reflects on their role at the school. Specifically, you will be asked to commit to setting up two way communication with your colleagues and reporting their input to the Restructuring Team. The outline below gives you an agenda for your BRIEF part of the meeting with the team you represent.

How often?: "periodically"

How long? Aim to close the discussion after 15 minutes; if you detect that more discussion is needed, set the topic aside, gather any additional information, and schedule time on an upcoming team meeting to complete the topic

How?

1. Explain in summary the process you follow to assess an indicator (Step 4).
 Recommended highlights = four components of the worksheet (level of implementation; priority; opportunity; evidence for ratings/ conclusions)
 *Consider bringing a sample blank worksheet to give your colleagues
 ** See your school's Process Manager to access worksheets, reports, etc. as needed **
 ? WHO is your school's Process Manager? _____
2. Share a list of the indicators your subgroup assessed (or one or two you want others to reflect on/ respond to).
 *Some may be curious about the full list of indicators. If they haven't been distributed/ circulated at a general faculty meeting, might be wise to bring a few copies.
3. Distribute the completed worksheet (have the process manager print it off the online system for you) for one or all the indicators you want to discuss with your colleagues.
4. Briefly summarize the discussion your subgroup had around that indicator and the conclusions reached around (a) level of implementation; (b) priority; (c) opportunity and (d) evidence.
5. Ask for feedback.
 Do the conclusions agree with your judgments about the practice?
 Is there evidence we didn't mention that we should?
 Are the priority and opportunity ratings reasonable and realistic?
 Should we include this in our improvement plan?

*Depending on how your colleagues prefer to work, you may want to type up a feedback form and invite teachers to offer their ideas in writing anonymously. Set a deadline and location for their input -- don't let it drag on!

I hope you find this newsletter helpful. Please contact me if you have suggestions for items to include in a future issue or recommendations for improvement. BE SURE to distribute this to your team members and others who might find this information useful. Thanks!

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2012-2013 SINI 4 Restructuring Planning Year Schools and Principals

School	Principal	Email
Allenstown Elementary	Lynn Allen	llallen@sau53.org
Bakie Elementary	Deborah Bamforth	dbamforth@sau17.org
Barnstead Elementary	Timothy Rice	trice@barnstead.k12.nh.us
Barrington Elementary	Mary Maxfield	mmaxfield@barrington.k12.nh.us
Bartlett Elementary School	David Bousquet	dbousquet@goffstown.k12.nh.us
Belmont Middle School	Aaron Pope	apope@sau80.org
Bethlehem Elementary	Kim Stoloski	kstoloski@bethlehem.k12.nh.us
Bristol Elementary School	Dana Andrews	dandrews@sau4.org
Broken Ground School	Susan Lauze	slauz@concordnhschools.net
Center Woods Elementary	Jess Potter	jess.potter@sau24.org
Charlestown Primary School	Lynn Carey	lcarey@sau60.org
Concord Senior HS	Eugene Connolly	gconn@concordnhschools.net
Derry Village School	Steve Miller	smiller@derry.k12.nh.us
Dr. H.O. Smith School	Scott Baker	sbaker@sau81.org
Hills Garrison Elementary	Marilyn Martellini	mmartellini@sau81.org
John Stark Regional HS	Christopher Mosca	chris.mosca@sau24.org
Maple Avenue School	Catherine Davignon	cdavignon@claremont.k12.nh.us
Matthew Thornton School	Carol Mack	cmack@londonderry.org
Milton Elementary School	Polly Golden	polly.golden@sau64.org
North Londonderry School	Mary Coltin	mcoltin@londonderry.org
Nottingham Elementary Sch	Michelle Carvalho	mcarvalho@nottingham.k12.nh.us
Pelham Elementary School	Thomas Adamakos	tadamakos@pelhamsd.org
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South Londonderry School	Linda Boyd	lboyd@londonderry.org
Southwick School	Richard Hines	rhines@winnisquam.k12.nh.us
William Allen School	Christopher Foley	foley.c@rochesterschools.com
Woodland Heights Elementary	Dennis Dobe	ddobe@laconia.k12.nh.us

